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PHOTOGRAPHIC VIEWS

IN

TANJORE AND TRIVADY.

BY CAPTAIN L. TRIPE, GOVERNMENT PHOTOGRAPHER,

MADRAS PRESIDENCY.

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With Descriptive Notes,

BY

THE REV. G. U. POPE.

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LIST OF VIEWS WITH DESCRIPTIONS.

No. I.

Tanjore Fort, the Wall and Ditch.

The Tanjore Fort was built by the Nayakar kings of Tanjore, but has been considerably enlarged by the kings of the Mahratta dynasty. It surrounds the entire city in which there are (exclusive of the suburbs) 20,000 inhabitants.

The little fort or citadel contains a tank, the water of which is much esteemed by the people, the large temple, and a christian church built by Schwartz the Missionary.

The Fort has stood several sieges, especially in 1674 by the Madura Nayakars, and in the 17th century by Ekoji the leader of the Mahrattas.

Tanjore became the capital of the *Soran* kingdom early in the 16th century: but it had been a place of great importance for centuries previous, and its rulers had, alternately with those of Mysore and Madura, governed the Southern Carnatic.

Much interesting information regarding Tanjore and its successive rulers may be sifted out of Taylor's Oriental Historical Manuscripts, Vol. I.

The Tanjore Purana says that one Tanjan a demon, with his family, were the first settlers; but Hindu myths are constantly invented to account for names of places and persons. It is curious that the prince of a division of the Huns was always called the Tanjou.

No. II.

The Monster Gun of Tanjore.

This huge gun is composed of rings of iron welded together and encircled by rings of brass at equal distances. Its dimensions are.

Length	24 feet 5 inches.
External circumference ..	10 feet 3 inches.
Internal do.	6 feet 5 inches.

It has recived the name of Rajah Gopala, and as this is a name of Vishnu it may be inferred that it was made by one of the Vaishnava Nayakar kings. It certainly belongs to that period.

It is said to have been once fired, on which occasion the inhabitants of the Fort were warned by beat of drum to leave their houses. A train of powder was laid for two miles and 40 minutes elapsed before the fire reached the gun. The sound it seems, was as if mount Meru had exploded.

Like the monster gun used at the siege of Constantinople by Mahomed I, it would certainly be more terrible to those who fired it than to the enemy.

It seems to have been intended to be the palladium of the fort, and has been worshipped at various times.

No. III.

The Palace and interjacent part of the Town.

The Tanjore Palace was erected at various times by the successive rulers of the city. It covers a vast extent of ground, and like most other buildings of the kind in India affords the strongest contrasts on every side between rude magnificence and the most squalid misery.

Recently a splendid hall of the Nayakar kings has been excavated. It had been buried for 150 years beneath the ruins of a part of the old palace.

The lofty erection to the left is the seven storied tower described in No. 4.

The tower in the centre is the arsenal. That to the right was erected by a Nayakar king under the following circumstances; he was accustomed to ride in to Shrirangam (the famous Vaishnava shrine near Trichinopoly every day and return to dinner; but the king of Trichinopoly formed the design of causing him to be murdered, and bribed a brahman to mingle poison with the holy Tulasi water. At the moment of presenting the poisoned draught his courage failed him and he confessed the fraud. The pious Tanjorean simply enquired whether the poisoned water had been used in the service of the god or not, and on receiving an answer in the affirmative drank it up without hesitation. A miracle rewarded his piety and he escaped unhurt; but he resolved to visit the shrine no more, and built this tower from whose top he could obtain a view of the distant temple, and perform his devotions in safety.

It seems probable that the old Tanjore palace was erected by architects who were thoroughly acquainted with the style of architecture used in the buildings in Bijanagar, which were themselves formed on the model of those erected in Delhi by its Mahomedan rulers. The Saracenic style every where mingles with that properly Indian.

In the modern parts of these buildings there is nothing worthy of notice. Of the kings who have successively occupied it, little authentic information can be obtained.

One story related in a Tamil M. S. published by Mr. Taylor is interesting. In the latter part of the 17th century a king called Achuta Vijaya Ragava Nayakar reigned in Tanjore. His daughter who was possessed of great charms of mind and body, was sought in marriage by the son of the king of Madura. The Tanjore prince refused, and war was declared in which the Tanjore troops were worsted and the fort closely besieged.

The Tanjore Rajah who was then an old man of eighty, seeing that all was lost, placed his wives and children in an inner chamber, and arming them, told them, on receiving a message from himself, to kill themselves. He then, after embracing his son with whom he had been at variance before, rushed into the thickest of the fight. But all was of no avail, so the message was sent and the royal ladies despatched themselves with swords, after which a slave fired a train of gun powder and blew up the part of the palace where they were.

The old Rajah and his son fell sword in hand in the midst of their enemies. The legendary addition to this is, that the head of the Srirangam temple, of which the old Rajah was a constant supporter, saw him, at the very moment of his death, coming with all his family in solemn procession to visit the shrine, but that on his going out to meet them, they passed by in solemn silence and entering the adytum disappeared.

No. IV.

The Seven storied Tower of the Palace.

This tower seen from a distance has a very fine effect, but this is destroyed by a nearer view. It is a striking mixture of squalor and magnificence.

It was built by Serfojee I, who visited Kasi, and saw such a tower belonging to a dancing girl of the temple there. It occupied 35 years in the erection.

Around the windows were figures of lions in stucco, from which circumstance it received the name of Sherza (in Persian a lion.)

It is a curious mixture of Saracenic and European architecture, and the lightning conductor on the top reminds the visitor that some rays of western civilization have reached even the Tanjore Palace.

No. V.

Facade on the W. Side of the Nayakar Durbar Hall.

This fine quadrangle is the most pure and perfect specimen of the Nayakar architecture to be found. Similar buildings in Madura betray the influence of Italian artists: this is purely native. When thronged with the warlike followers of the Nayakar, the king enthroned on the splendid granite slab now occupied by the statue of one of the greatest of the Mahratta kings, the scene must have been sufficiently striking.

Behind, on the wall, there is a stucco representation of the enthronement of Rama.

No. VI.

Sivaji's Statue.

This statue is by Chantrey and is remarkably fine. The Rajah is represented as standing in an attitude of adoration, looking towards the great temple in the fort.

The turban which contains some valuable pearls is detached, and was not on the statue itself when the photograph was taken. The stone upon with the statue stands is almost as great a curiosity as the statue itself. It is of granite 24 feet long, 18 broad and 3 feet thick, the edges are covered with very clever sculptures representing the wars of the demons. On this stone the old Nayakar kings sat to administer justice.

In the church in the little fort, close by, is a work of Flaxman's which could not well be photographed, but which is of surpassing interest, and contrasts strangely and impressively with all around it.

Schwartz the venerable missionary is seen on his death bed. His successor, the simple minded but earnest Gericke stands near his head, with the Bible in his hand. The Rajah Serfojee, Schwartz's pupil, stands by the bed side, clasping the hand of the dying man, and three boys of the orphan school stand looking on with sad curious faces.

The whole forms a group which cannot be beheld without exciting feelings akin to those of him who uttered the prayer, "Let me die the death of the righteous and let my last end be like his."

No VII.

South Facade of the Quadrangle of the Nayakar Durbar Hall.

This is a very characteristic specimen of the kind of architecture which the Nayakar rulers brought from Bijanagar.

There is something very stately in the lofty pillars, which are every where surrounded by a foliated arch. The side arches now filled up were formerly open and thus there was free access to the hall on all sides from the outer court and all the other quadrangles of the palace.

Every suitor had access to the sovereign when seated on his throne. Here poets and learned men came to recite their compositions and challenge opponents, the king and his courtiers being the auditors and umpires. In such a place Kamban first recited the harmonious, flowing verses of the Tamil Ramayanam.

Here too councils of war were held and the plan of many a raid, into the territories of the southern palaiyankarar (Poligars) was doubtless agreed upon in this place.

But the Nayakar have passed away and their descendants now wait around the kacheris of our English officials as peons, or serve in our armies as sepoys.

And, romance apart, it is far better for the people that it should be so.

No. VIII.

Great Pagoda from the Fort Glacis

The three towers of the Great Pagoda here seen are the entrance towers of the Ganesa temple, and the great central tower. The outer ones are modern, probably of the time of Serfojee I. There are always five small balls on the towers of Siva temples, symbolical of the five syllables of the sacred formula "saviya nama," (salutation to Siva.)

It is said that the middle one was pulled down by a Nayakar king who was an ardent Vaishnavite, who was visited by a dangerous illness which deterred him from pulling down the great tower as he had intended.

Curious evidences of the intense hatred between the Vaishnavites and Saivites are to be found every where in the traditions of the people.

On one occasion a devotee of Siva saw a crow sharpening its beak on the wall of a Vaishnava shrine, and exclaimed with delight, "O meritorious crow; are you too engaged in destroying the abodes of impiety?"

Notwithstanding the great efforts of Ramanuja (the Vaishnavite propagandist) in the 12th century, the Saiva sect is predominant in the south.

No. IX.

Sculptured figure on the entrance tower of the Great Pagoda.

This temple is dedicated to Vrihatisvaran (the great ruler) a name of Siva. It was built by Kadu-vettiya-soran, a Soran king of Kanchi (Conjiveram,) who from being at intense enemy of the Saiva set, became its most strenuous supporter, and is said to have built in various parts of his dominions 108 temples in honour of Siva. He lived in the early part of the 14th century.

Many details regarding the building of the temple are inscribed on the basement, which is especially well designed. This inscription is in Tamil, but the character differs considerably from that now in use, approaching to the Malayalam in some respects.

The temple was evidently intended as a rival to the celebrated Vishnu shrine at Srirangam, near Trichinopoly.

It is little frequented, and but for its endowments would soon go to decay. Demon worship and the Vedanta system, have supplanted the systems of orthodox Hinduism, the former among the lower classes, the latter among the middle and upper.

The figure is that of a Dvara-palagan or doorkeeper. He has four hands, with two of which he invites the worshippers to enter, while the others are held up in a cautionary manner to warn them not to draw near presumptuously.

No. X.

The Great Bull from the Gateway.

One of the most striking objects on entering the enclosure of the temple is the Bull, which in an elevated Mandabam, or porch in front of the principal temple, is represented crouching down, as if paying reverence to his great master Siva. Nandi himself (who is incarnate as the bull) is the door keeper of Kailasa, Siva's abode.

Smaller bulls are to be found in every part of the temple, and the presence of these is the surest sign of a Siva temple.

The bull is itself worshipped. Among the Linga-daris of Mysore this is in fact the most popular object of worship under the name of Basava, who was an incarnation of Nandi in the 11th century. The Mysorean origin of the Nayakar rulers of Tanjore will account for their general introduction of it in the South. It is not very popular among the Tamilians themselves.

Living Bulls are worshipped in most parts of India and every where may be seen mendicants (pandarams) leading about bulls, living types of Nandi decorated with tawdry many-coloured housings.

In the antechamber of the Mysore Rajah's palace a beautiful little animal of this kind is kept, and seems to be viewed as the palladium of the palace.

No. XI.

The Central Tower of the Great Pagoda.

This is one of the finest towers in India. Its base is a square whose side is 32 yards. The height is 96 yards; its shadow does not project beyond the base, an essential matter according to Hindo opinion in such a building. It covers the innermost shrine or adytum (Garbha-graham,) in which the principal idol is placed.

The circular mass at the top is said to be granite (or syenite) and various stories are told about the way in which it was raised to its present elevation. The most probable is that an inclined plane extending five miles from the base of the temple was built of mud, and that along this the stone was laboriously rolled to its present lofty station. There was plenty of forced labour in those days.

Around the basement of the temple is an inscription in ancient Tamil characters giving a minute account of the contributions to the building.

Among the figures represented in stucco on the upper part of the tower, a merry white face surmounted by a broad brimmed hat is to be found, a harmless joke of the architect.

It is a pleasing thing to be able to say after the minutest inspection of the temple in every accessible part, that none of its sculptures, as far as I am aware, are calculated to to shock the feelings of the most modest.

The lingam itself is here regarded by most as a pillar in which the energy of the Supreme dwells. Christian and even Mahommedan influences have greatly modified the Hinduism of the South.

No. XII.

The Great Bull.

The bull (Nandi) is the sacred Vehicle of Siva, and receives divine honours in every Saiva shrine; but this is probably the finest to be found in any temple in southern India. It is of syenite, and by constant anointing has acquired the appearance of marble.

It deviates in no respect from the usual type. It has but three legs visible, it being a tradition that in this iron age Siva's bull goes lame, being deprived of a leg.

No stone like that of which the bull is made is to be found in the neighbourhood of Tanjore, so it must have been brought at an incredible expense of labour from a great distance, some say 400 miles.

There are innumerable legends about the bull.

One of these says that it was accustomed to leave the temple at night to graze in the neighbouring gardens, upon which a complaint was made to Siva, who drove a nail into its tongue, and through its back, from which time it has not left its pedestal.

Another tradition is that the bull was a very small calf when it was first placed in its present position, where it has grown to its present colossal proportions. The Brahmans alarmed at its prodigious growth drove a nail into its forehead, from which time it has not increased in size.

No. XIII.

Side entrance of the principal Temple.

The basement of the larger Temple of which a characteristic View is given here is of a very simple and elegant design. It seems probable that it is older than the rest of the building. There is a precisely similar basement in Curtalam in Tinnevelly, but the building there was never carried further,

The workmanship of the upper part of the Temple is very rude, compared with the large Temples in the South. The deep shadows give to the lower part of this portion of the building as a whole a very striking effect.

The figure by the entrance is a Dvara-palagan or door keeper. In features he is of the true Mysorean type.

The Temple itself is said to be the first of 108 built at the same time in honour of Siva on the same plan, but each one diminishing in size and elaborateness.

No. XIV.

Porch and main entrance to the principal Temple.

This is the entrance of the most sacred shrine where the original image of Siva is placed. This image is said to have been here long before the Temple itself was built. It is not now considered very sacred, the smaller temples and the lingams being decidedly more popular.

The worship of Siva appeals much less to the human sympathies of the mass of the people than that of Vishnu, or of the inferior gods or goddesses. It has seldom flourished where it has not been introduced and upheld by authority.

Ample endowments maintain the Tanjore Temple; but silence almost unbroken reigns for the greater part of the year in its ample purlieus.

No XV.

Western side of the Great central Tower.

No. XVI.

Northern side of the great central Tower and the Temple of Parvati.

The small temple in this view is dedicated to Brihat-isvari (the great goddess) the wife of Siva. In the enclosure of each large temple smaller shrines are always erected in honor of the wives and children of the principal deity. It is the family mansion, the palace of the god.

The history of Parvati (she of the mountain) is to be found in the opening padalams of the Skanda-purana. It is there related that she left Kailasa, Siva's heaven, to become incarnate as the daughter of Himalaya, in order that she might bear a son (Subramanya) who should revive on earth the dying piety of the worshippers of Siva.

Her adventures are interesting, and her character not unskilfully drawn. The

popular conception of her wavers between that of a kind and beneficent mother, a species of Demeter, and that of a resistless and consuming energy to be propitiated only by cruel and obscene rites.

No. XVII.

Subrahmanya Swami's Temple.

This temple is considered to be one of the finest specimens of stone cutting in southern India.

It is of considerably later date than the larger pagoda and is especially remarkable for the minute beauty of the architectural embellishments of its lower part; but there is an entire absence in this, as in every similar building in south India, of beauty in the general plan.

Subrahmanya is the name of the younger son of Siva. He is so called as being the especial deity of the Brahmans and hence his shrines are generally very much ornamented. He is the Hindu Mars. His worship is one of the later developements of Hinduism. He rides upon a peacock. Hence this bird is frequently represented on the temples dedicated to him. He is said to have been born in Benares, and his history in the Skanda-purana shews that he was engaged in a series of conflicts, which probably refer to contests between the Vaishnavas and and Saivites. He was probably a Rajput warrior who espoused the cause of the Saivites vigorously and protected the brahmans. Hence his name and attributes.

No. XVIII.

The South Facade of Subrahmanya Swami's Temple.

This is another view of the building described in the last article. This part of the building is entirely of syenite, and the stone is wrought with wonderful skill and minuteness. Although it has stood for some centuries, the sharp, well defined carving seems as though it had but just been finished by the hand of the artisan.

The figures in the recesses represent Subrahmanya himself.

The traditional account of the origin of this temple is that one day while the stone masons were engaged in building the great temple, the work people were eating betel when the king suddenly arriving they ran away and concealed themselves. One of the stone cutters unaware of the circumstance continued his work, and without looking behind him stretched out his hand for betel, upon which the king himself folded up a leaf and put it into his hand. This grievous breach of decorum was atoned for by the subsequent erection at his own expense of the Subrahmanya Temple.

No. XIX.

Sacred cistern and water spout belonging to the Subrahmanya Temple.

This cistern is of one piece of stone, and must have cost immense pains to work. The sculptures on its sides, and in different parts of this building are of considerable merit. They exhibit a spirit and freedom not to be found in any others in south India.

When water is poured over the idol it flows into this cistern and is considered to possess a peculiar sanctity. Drinking this water is one of the most meritorious and purifying acts of the Hindu worship.

The avenue between the temple and outer wall was cleared and paved by Serfojee I. Circumambulating the temple, beginning on the right side, is a duty incumbent on every worshipper.

The native idea of the merit of these sculptures is expressed in the story current in Tanjore that because the Subrahmanya temple is in the shape of a chariot and the stone horses which originally had wings are so life-like, they actually began to fly away with the whole building when the stone mason at once broke off the wings and thus prevented their flight. This is fully believed by the people.

It is difficult for us in fact to realize the devotion felt by a Hindu for such shrines as these. They are not mere places of worship; the god dwells there. His image is pervaded by his presence and energy. It is washed, anointed, garlanded, tended as a living being. In the dim twilight it is heard to speak. The members of the august family from their various shrines in the same quadrangle meet and converse in the night. They have wants which the offerings of the devout really relieve, and thus the god is indebted to his votaries and may be expected to repay the debt.

No. XX.

Arcade on the inner side of the wall surrounding the Great Pagoda.

A cursory glance at this range of buildings will serve to shew that it is, in part at least, of an older date than the other portions of the temple; or, at least, that it was erected before the workmen employed in the temple itself had acquired the skill which they afterwards displayed.

In the walls may be found stones with traces of inscriptions nearly effaced and quite illegible built in so as to shew that they formed parts of some older buildings.

There was probably a temple on this side centuries before the present magnificent structure. Many of the idols are known to have been in existence before the temple.

The compartments beneath are full of lingams of black stone, brought from all the sacred places of the south. These are regularly adorned, anointed and worshipped.

There are 216 of them in all. The lingam was the earliest form if not the only form under which Siva was worshipped throughout the peninsula. The rude pithas set up by the lower castes of the south are imitatious of the lingam.

No. XXI.

Buildings at Trivady used by the Rajah of Tanjore on his visit to the Pagoda of that Town.

There are few spots in southern India more lovely than that where a branch of the noble Kaveri river flows near Trivady or Trivaiyar.

The river spanned by a very graceful bridge wends along, its banks overhung by trees, among which the slender Bambusa with its exquisitely curving branches, and delicate foliage is the most beautiful.

Here multitudes of Brahmans perform their devotions, providing for themselves extempore emblems of Siva kneaded from the clay of the river's bed.

Great is the merit of bathing at certain times in the sacred stream. On this account, and doubtless partly from some appreciation of the exquisite beauty of the scenery, the Rajahs of Tanjore were accustomed to spend much of their time in this charming retreat.

It will be seen that the buildings are modern but though the details are European, the general effect is rather Chinese.

The early founders of the Saiva sect in the south understood the art of choosing the richest soil and the most beautiful situations for their establishments, such sites they obtained as grants in perpetuo from the Rajahs, and founded towns there. There is a striking likeness between all such places in every part of the Dekkan.

No. XXII.

The Ghats at Trivady.

The most romantic spots in India are always the sacred bathing places on the banks of the rivers.

At day break crowds of brahmans with their white or slightly coloured garments are seen performing their morning ablutions and ceremonies on one flight of steps. On the other, the women in bright red cloths and with shining brass vessels are busily fetching water for the day's supply. Here a group are energetically washing their cloths, and here and there other groups as earnestly talking over the most recent scandal in the village.

The domes are erected over places where the idols are brought out on certain occasions when they are bathed in the sacred stream.

The land around Trivady is especially fertile, and the brahmans are intensely eager in the pursuit of the good things of this world. The whole temple establishment is nowadays a very secondary matter in Trivady.

No. XXIII.

The approach to the Temple at Trivady.

Trivady (the sacred footstep) is generally called Triruvaiyar, or the five sacred streams.

Of these streams one is the Ganges, which comes under ground from the north and rises in the sacred tank, another is the from the mouth of Siva's sacred bull, another is the remainder of the milk with which Parvati nourished her son Subrahmanyan.

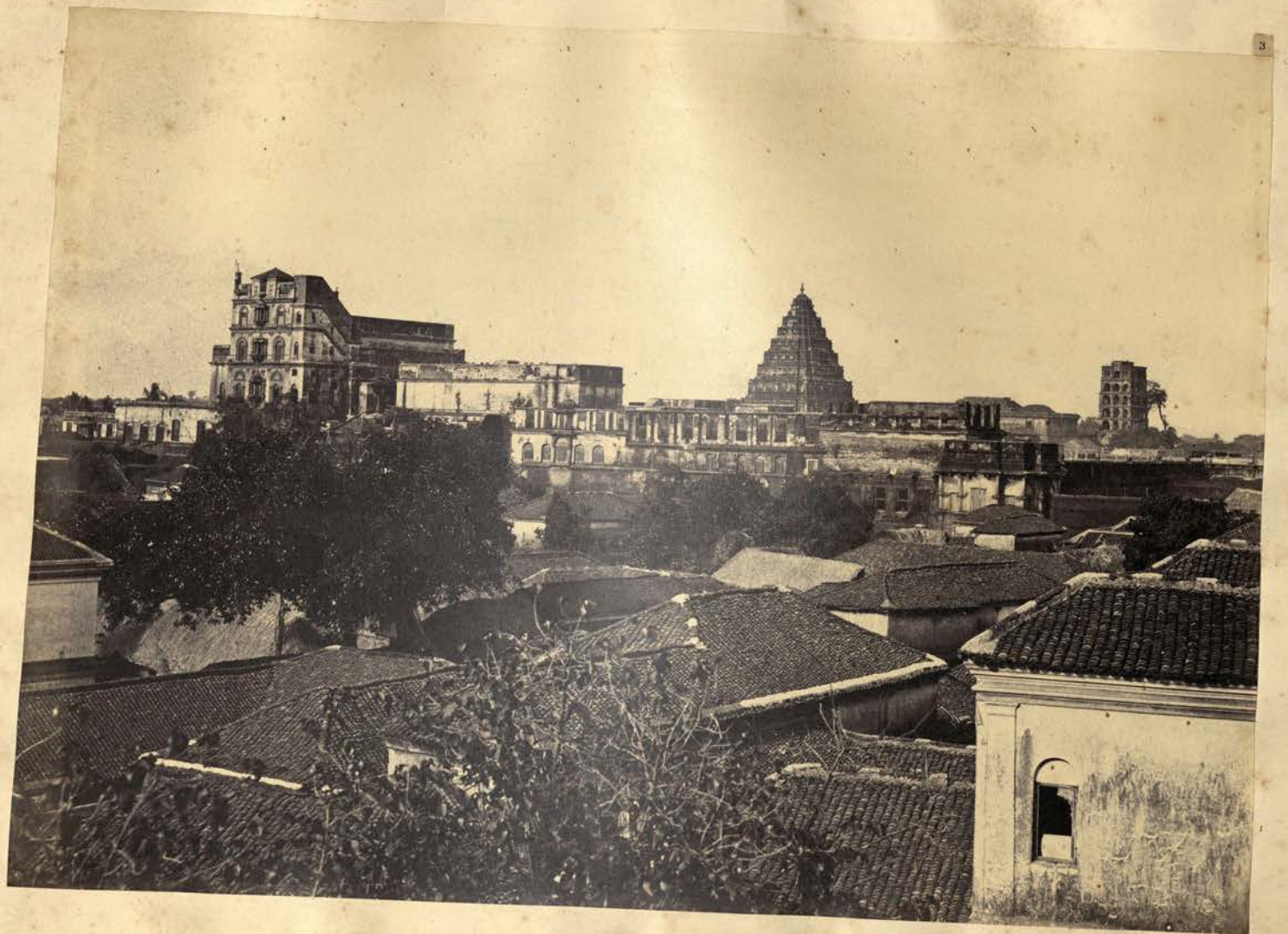
Karikala Soran, a king who reigned over the Southern kingdom in the early part of the 14th century, is said to have dug channels and brought the river Kaveri to Trivady.

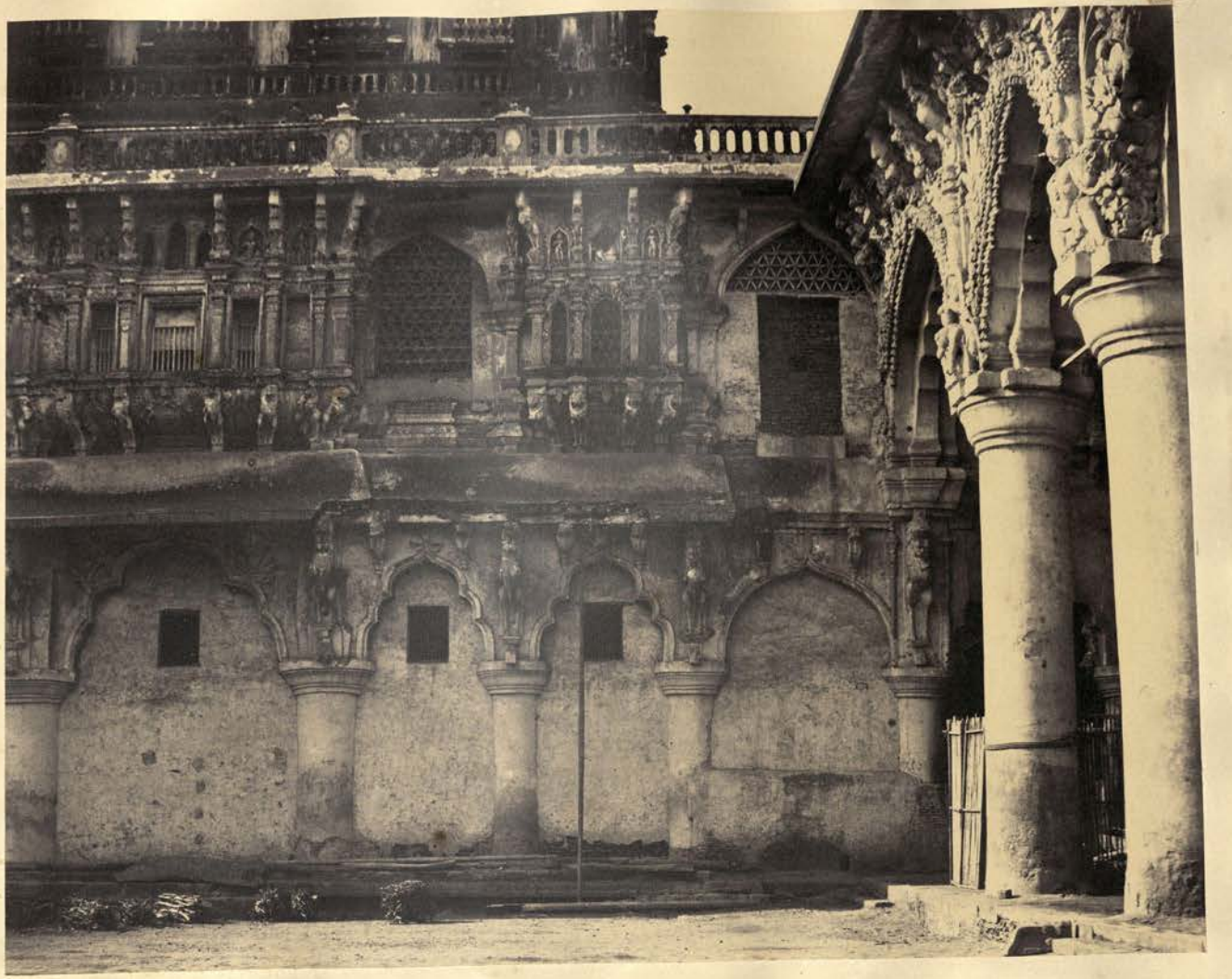
The temple is dedicated to Siva, and is of about the same age as that in Tanjore.

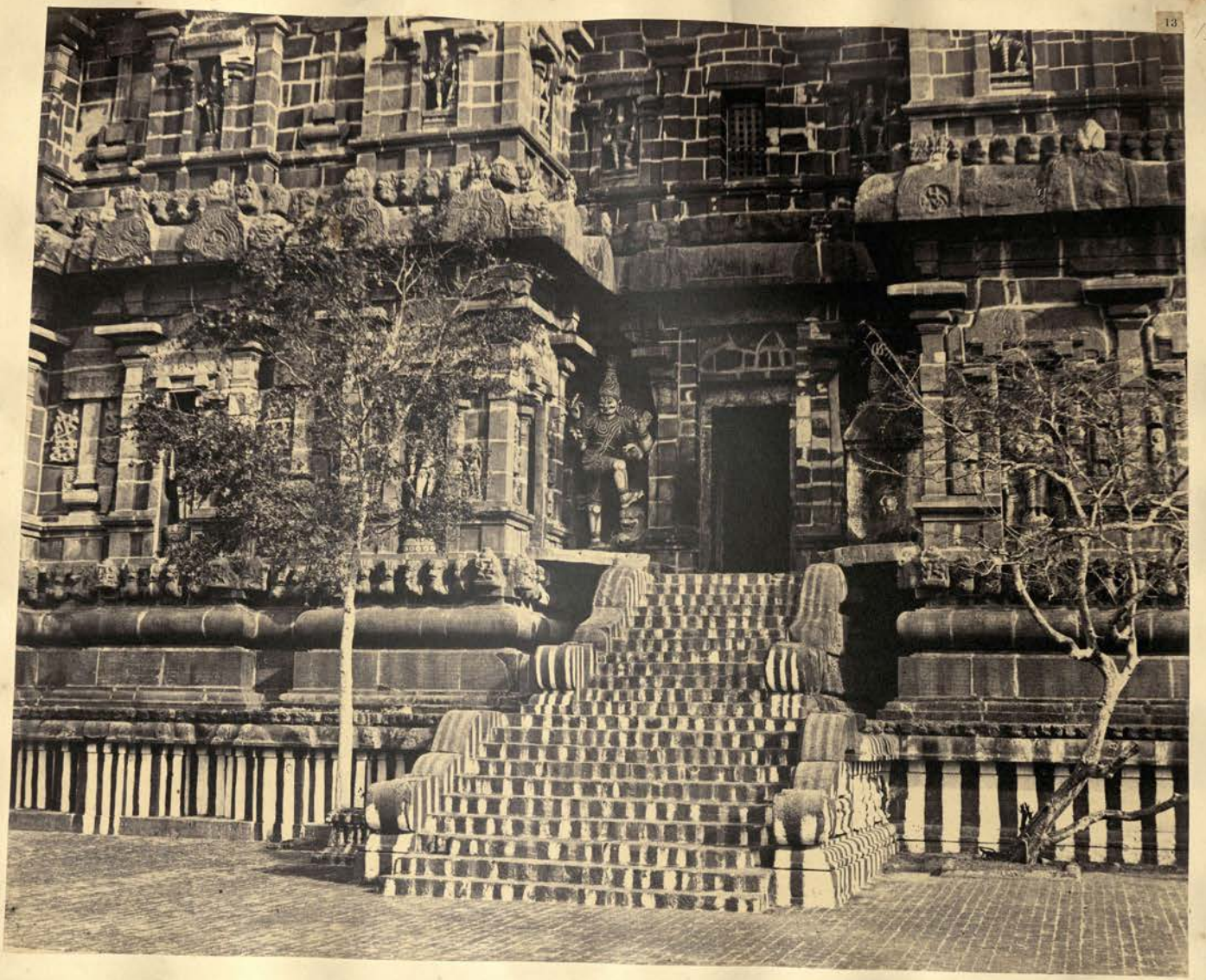
Another legend says that Agastya (the first Tamil grammarian) brought the nymph Kaveri in a small vessel from the north, but that she escaped at Trivady and throwing herself on the earth become the stream which flows near to the town.

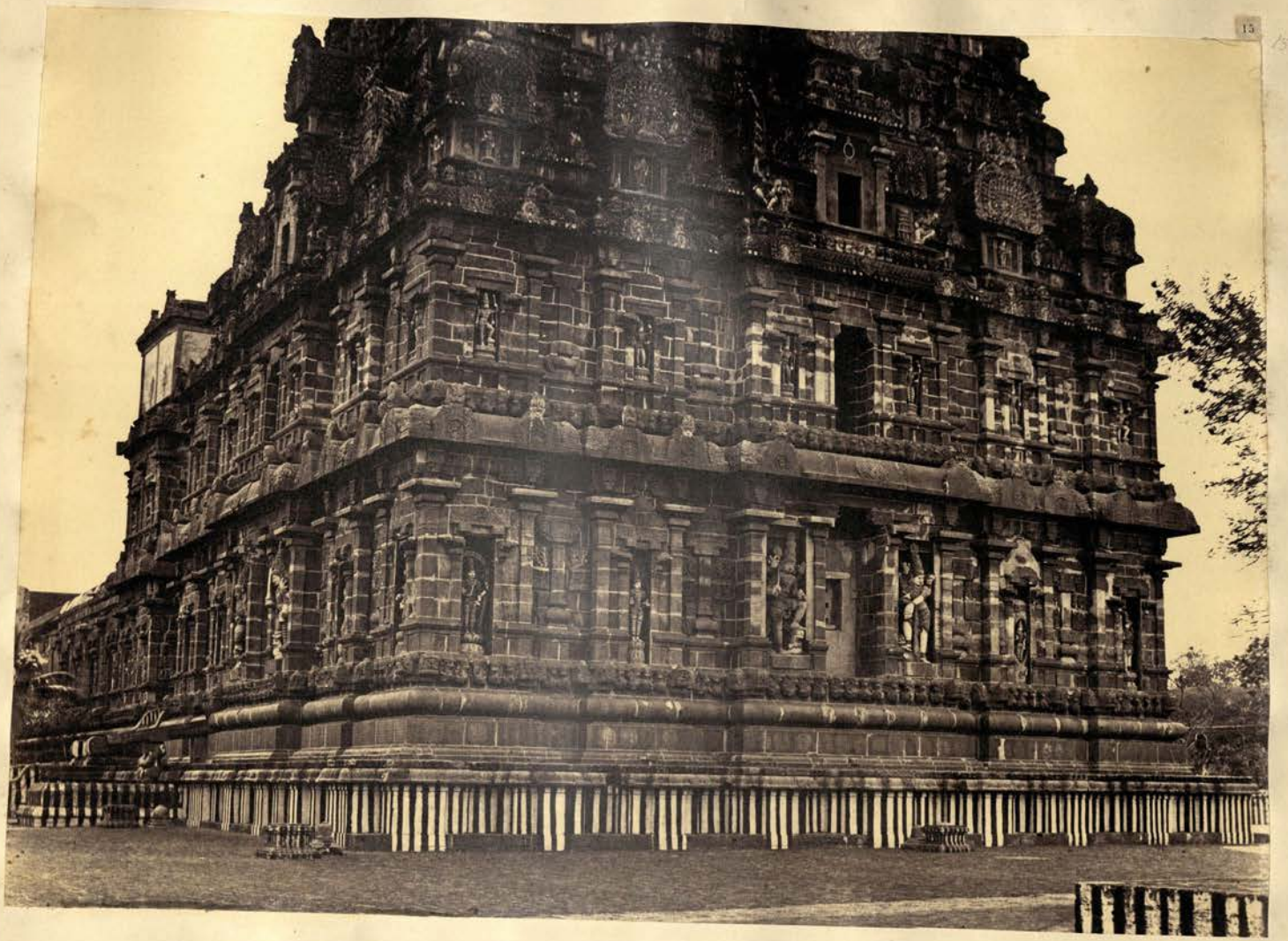
There are several Hindu monasteries of great repute in the place which retains to a great extent its native character.

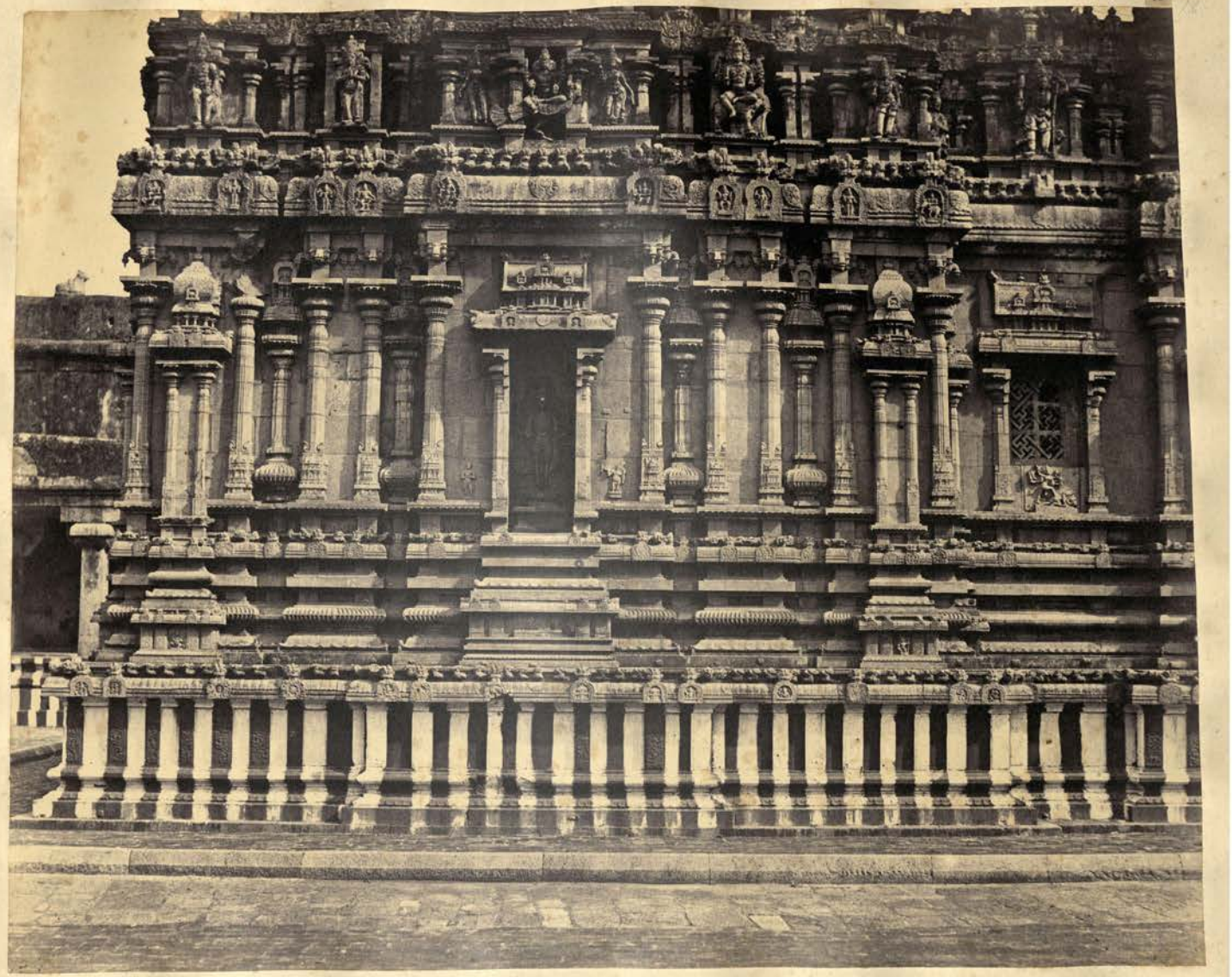
It is the residence of a Tahsildar, and a Taluk school has been established here.











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